



## Adam Bell.



Erry it was in the crâne forest,  
among the leas & crâne:  
Whereto men hunt Cast & well,  
with bowes & arrowes kéne.

To raise the Ware out of their den,  
such sights haue not of bane kéne:  
As by thre yemen of the South Country,  
by them it is I meane.

The one of them height Adam Bell,  
another Clim of the Clough:  
The third was William of Cloudeffe,  
an Archer god enough.

They were out-lawed for Henison,  
these yemen euery chone:

They swoze them brethren on a day,  
to English word to go.

Now listh and listh Gentlemen,  
that of mirth loneth to heare:

Two of them single men,  
the third had a wedded fere.

William was the wedded man,  
much more then was his care:

He said to his brethren on a day,  
to Carlile he would fare.

There to speake with faire Alice his wife,  
and with his children thre:

By my troth said Adam Bell,  
not by the counsell of me.

For if we go to Carlile brother,  
and from this wild word wend,

If that the Justice do you take,  
your life is at an end.

May it was in yere fowte,  
Amonge the leaues greene,  
Wher as men Lyné both east & west,  
With bowe & arrowe shon,  
To raise the deue out of his den,  
Such lighte haile oft been seen,  
As by 3. yemen of the north contrey,  
By hem it is I mene.

The one of hem naimed Adam bell,  
The other Clim of the Cloughe,  
The 3rd, was William of Cloudesle,  
An Archer good enough,  
They were out laved for uerison,  
Hise 3. yemen euery one,  
For swore hem butthen yere aday,  
To englissh wode for to gone,  
Now lile & lisen gentlemen,  
That of myght tooueth to louse,  
Two of hem were singell men,  
The 3. had a wedded wife,  
William was the wedded man,  
Must more then was his rate,  
He said for his bewyter yere aday,  
To Cantell. He woude faine,  
For to lroue with fair Alice his wife,  
A wife his eldron 3.

## *Adam Bell.*

William of Cloudeſle.

Thereat the Juſtice was full ſaine,  
and ſo the Sheriffe alſo :

Thou ſhalt not trauell hit her for nought,  
thy meed thou ſhalt haue ere thou goe.

They gaue to her a right good gowne,  
of Scarlet it was I heard ſaine :

She tooke the giſt and home ſhe went,  
and changed her doſtore againe.

They raiſed the towne of merry Carlile,  
in all the haſte they can :

And thronging faſt vnto the houſe,  
as faſt as they might gan.

There they beſet the good yeoman,  
about on every ſide :

William heard great noiſe of the folke,  
that thither-ward faſt hie.

Alice opened a backe window,  
and looked all abo it :

She was ware of the Juſtice and Sheriffe,  
and with them a great rout.

Alas treaſon, then cryed Alice,  
euer woe may thou be :

Go into my chamber huſband ſhe ſaid,  
ſweet William of Cloudeſle.

He tooke his ſword and his buckler,  
his bolue and children three :

And went into the ſtrongest chamber,  
where he thought ſureſt to be.

Faire Alice like a louer true,  
with a Dollar in her hand :

Said, he ſhall dye that cometh in  
this doore, while I may ſtand.

Cloudeſle bent aright good bowe,  
that was of a truſty tre :



## Adam Bell.

If that I come not to morrow boother,  
by pyne to you againe:  
Trust you then that I am taken,  
or else that I am slaine.  
He toke his leave of his bythen two,  
and to Carlile he is gon:  
There he knocked at his owne window,  
shortly and anon.  
Where be you faire Alice he said,  
my wife and children thre:  
Algedily let in thine owne husband,  
William of Cloudeste.  
Alas then said faire Alice,  
and sghed very sore:  
This place hath bene beset for you,  
full halfe a yere and more.  
Now I am here said Cloud. A-:  
I would that in we were:  
Now seth vs meat and drinke enough,  
and let vs make good chere.  
He fetcht him meat and drinke plenty,  
like a true wedded wife:  
And pleased him with what she had,  
whom she loved as her life.  
There lay an old wife in that place,  
a little before the fire:  
Whiche William had found of charity,  
more then seven yere.  
Up she rose, and for by the gods,  
evill might she see be there fore:  
For she had set no foot on ground,  
in seven yeres be fore.  
She went into the Justice hall,  
as fast as she could hie:  
There at night she said he come to to morrow,

William

## *Adam Bell.*

With my sword in the rout to run:  
Then here amongst mine enemies wand,  
So cruelly to burne.  
He took his sword and his buckler then,  
and among them all he ran:  
Where the people thickest were,  
he smote downe many a man.  
There might no man abide his strokes,  
so fiercely on them he run:  
Then they threw windlasses & daies on him,  
and so took that yeoman.  
There they him bound hand and foot,  
and in a deepe dungeon him cast.  
Now Cloudeste then said the Justice,  
thou shalt be hange in haste.  
One bowe shall I make said the Sheriffe,  
a paire of new gallowes thou shalt have,  
And all the gates of Carlile shall be shut,  
there shall no man come in thereat.  
Here shall not help: Clim of the Clough,  
nor yet Adam Bell,  
Though they come with a thousand moe,  
nor all the Devils in hell.  
Early in the morning the Justice arose,  
to the gates fast gan he gone:  
And commanded to shut close,  
lightly every chone.  
Then went to the Market place,  
as fast as he could hys:  
A paire of new gallowes there did he set up,  
beside the Willeze.  
A little boy stood them among,  
and a he wot in ant that gallows tree:  
They said to hang a good yeoman,  
called William of Cloudeste.

That

## Adam Bell.

He smote the Justice on the brest,  
that his arrow bar it in thre.  
Gods curse of his heart said William,  
this day thy estate did on:  
If it had bene no better then mine,  
it had bene neere the bone.  
Pals this Cloudeff: said the Justice,  
and thy bowe and thine arrows thes be:  
Gods curse on his heart, said faire Alice,  
that my husband counselleth so.  
Yet fire on the house said the Sheriffe,  
Nay no better it will be:  
And borne we thereto: William he saith,  
his wife and children thes.  
They fired the house in many a place,  
the fire flew on hys:  
Alas then said faire Alice,  
I see we here shall dye.  
William opened a backe window,  
that was in his chamber hys:  
And there with spits he did let wolue,  
his wife and children thes:  
For Christs love do them no harme,  
but breake yett all on me.  
William shot so wondrous well,  
till his arrows beere all go:  
And fire so fast about him fell,  
that his bowe string bent in two.  
He sparkles bent and fell upon,  
god William of Cloudeff:  
Bot then was he a weefull man,  
and said, this is a Cowards death to me.  
Never had I said William,

with

## *Adam Bell.*

They found the gates shut them into,  
round about on every side.

Glas, then said good Adam Bell,  
that euer we were made men :

These gates are that so wonderous well,  
that we may not come therein.

Then spake Clim of the Clough,  
with a wile we will be in bying :

Let us say we be messengers,  
straight come from the King.

Adam said I haue a Letter, well  
let us wisely warke :

We will say we haue the Kings seale,  
I hold the Porter no Clarke.

Then Adam Bell beate at the gate,  
with strokes great and strong :

The Porter heard such a noise therat,  
and to the gates he throng.

Who is there said the Porter,  
that maketh all this knocking ?

We be two messengers said they then,  
be come right from our King.

We haue a Letter said Adam Bell,  
to the Justice we must it bying :

Let us in our message to do,  
that we were againe to the King.

Here cometh none in said the Porter,  
by him that dyed of a tree :

Till that a false theefe he hangd,  
cald William of Cloudele.

Then spake Clim of the Clough,  
and swoze by Marys se :

If that we stand long without,  
like a theefe hangd shalt thou be.

Now here we haue the Kings seale,

## Adam Bell.

That little Boy was to have swine-herd,  
and kept saies Alice swine:  
Full oft he had sene Cloudele in the wood,  
and gaue him there to dine.  
He went out of a crevice of the wall,  
and lightly to the wood he ran:  
Where he met with these wighty yemen,  
soopty and amon.  
Alas then said the little boy,  
you carry here all too long:  
Cloudele is fane and downe to death,  
and ready to be hange.  
Alas then said god Adam Bell,  
that euer we saw this day:  
We might haue carried here with vs,  
so oft we did him praye.  
We might haue dwelt in grene Forrest,  
vnder these shadowes shene:  
And kept both him and vs at rest,  
out of trouble and fane.  
Adam bent a right god bowe,  
a great Hart sone he had slaine:  
Take that child he said to thy dinner,  
and bring me mine arrow againe.  
So to we go hence said these holly yemen,  
carry we no longer here:  
We shall him baptize by Gods grace,  
though we buy it for't here.  
So Carile went these god yemen,  
in a merry morning of May:  
There is a fit of Cloudele,  
and another is to say.

**A** And when they came to merry Carile,  
in a faire morning tide:



## *Adam Bell.*

And Cloudeſle lay ready in a Cart,  
faſt bound both ſote and hand:  
And a ſtrong rope about his necke,  
already ſoꝛ to hang.  
The Juſtice cald to him a lad,  
Cloudeſle clothes he ſhould haue,  
To take the meſure of that yeoman,  
and thereby to make him a grane.  
I haue ſene as great maruell ſaid Cloudeſle,  
as betwene this and prime:  
He that maketh a grane ſoꝛ me,  
himſelfe may lye therein.  
Thou ſpeaketh proudly ſaid the Juſtice,  
I will thee hang with my hand:  
Full well heard this his brethren two,  
there ſtill as they did ſtand.  
Then William caſt his eye aſide,  
and ſaw his two brethren  
At the corner of the market place wel prepared  
ready the Juſtice to chaſe.  
I ſee comfort ſaid Cloudeſle,  
yet hope I well to ſee:  
If I might haue my hands lot free,  
right little might I care.  
Then ſpake good Adam Bell,  
to Elm of the Clough ſo free:  
Brother ſee you marke the Juſtice well,  
loe yonder you may him ſee.  
At the Sheriffe ſhot I will,  
ſtrongly with an arrow keene:  
A better ſhot in merry Careſle,  
this ſenen years was not ſene.  
They loſed their arrowes both at once,  
of no man they had dyed:

## Adam Bell.

What surden art thou too?  
The Porter wend it had bene so,  
a no lightly olo of his hood.  
Wel come is my a oys seale he said,  
for that you shall come in:  
He opened the gates full shortly,  
an euill opening for him.  
Now are we in said Adam Bell,  
whereof we are right faine:  
But Christ he knowes aduredly,  
how we shall out againe.  
Had we the keyes said Clim of the Clough,  
right well then should we sped:  
Then might we come out well enugh,  
when we see time and ned.  
They called the Porter to counsell,  
and laung his nethe in two:  
And cast him in a deepe dungeon,  
and toke the keyes him fro.  
Now am I Porter said Adam Bell,  
for brother the keyes we haue here:  
The worst Porter in merry Carlile,  
that came this hundred yare.  
Now we will our bolues bend,  
into the towne will we go:  
For to deliuer our deare brother,  
that lyeth in care and wo.  
Then they bent their god yew bowes,  
and looked their strings were round:  
The Packet place in merry Carlile,  
they beset in that sound.  
And as they looked them beside,  
a paire of new gallows there they saw:  
And the Justice, with a Dues of Squirey,  
that indged William hanged to be.

And

## Adam Bell.

and the Bels backward did ring:  
Many a woman said alas,  
and many their hands did wring.  
The Baron of Carlisle forth came then,  
and with him a full great rout:  
These peomen dreaw him full sore,  
for of their hues they were in great doubt.  
They Baron came armed a full great pace,  
with a Pollax in his hand:  
Many a strong man with him was,  
within that floure to stand.  
The Baron smot at Cloudestle with his bill,  
his buckler brast in two:  
Full many a peoman with great evil,  
alas treason they cryed for inew.  
Hawe we the gates fast they bad,  
that these Traytors thereout not go:  
But all for nought was that they wrought,  
for so fast downe they were layd.  
Will they all thre that so manfully fought,  
were gotten out of a bynde.  
Hawe here your keyes said Adam Bell,  
my office here I forsake:  
If you do by my counsell,  
a new Porter do you make.  
He thre to the keyes at their heads,  
and bad them cull te threine:  
And all that letteth any good peoman,  
to come and comfot his wife.  
Thus be the good peomen gone to the woods,  
as lightly as leafe on linde:  
They laugh and be merry in their moods,  
their enemies were farre behinde.  
When they came to English wood,  
vnder the trusty tre:

## Adam Bell.

¶ The one bit the Justice, the other the Sheriffe,  
that both their sides gan bleed.

All men boyed that stood them nye,

When the Justice fell to the ground :

And the Sheriffe nye him by,  
either had his deaths wound.

All the Cittizens fast gan sit,  
they durst no longer abide :

¶ Here lightly they loosed Cloudelle,

where he with ropes lay tyde.

William stept to an Officer of the Colone,  
his are out of his hand he wyng :

In each side he smote them downe,

him thought he tarried all too long.

William said to his brethren two,  
this day let vs live and dye :

If ever you haue neede as I haue now,  
the same shall you finde by me.

¶ They shot so well that tyde,

so; their strings were of silke sure,

What they kept the streets on euery side,

the battell did long endure.

¶ They fought together like brethren true,

like hardy men and bold :

¶ Any a man to the ground they threw,

and made many a heart cold.

But when their arrowes were all gone,

men pressed on them full fast :

¶ They drew their swords out anon,

and their boluers from them cast.

¶ They went lightly on their way,

with swords and bucklers round :

By that it were mid of the day,

they made many a wound.

¶ Any an out boyne in Carlile was bloune,

and

## Adam Bell.

Hereof to speake said Adam Bell,

It is it is no wise :

The meat that we must sup withall,  
it resteth yet fast on tole.

Then went they doونه into the land,

these Noblemen all three :

Care of them stews a Hart of Grece,  
the best they could there see.

Hane here the best Alice my wife,

said William of Cloudele :

Because ye so boldly stand by me,

when I was slaine full nye.

Then they went to supper,

with such meat as they had :

And thanked God for their fortune,

they were both merry and glad.

And when they had supped well,

certaine without any lease,

Cloudele said we will to our King,

to get vs a charter of peace.

Alice shall be at our solourning,

in a Pury here beside :

By two sonnes shall with her go,

and there they shall abide.

By eldest sonne shall go with me,

for him I haue no care :

And he shall bring you word againe,

how that we do fare.

Thus be these good yeomen to London gon,

as fast as they can gon :

Till they came to the Kings pallace,

where they would make abode.

And when they came to the Kings Court,

unto the pallace gate :

Of no man would they aske leaue,

but



## Adam Bell.

Where they found belous full god,  
and attowes great plenty.

So God me helpe said Adam Bell,  
and Clim of the Clough so free:  
I woulo we were in merry Carlisle,  
besoys that faire lande.

When sac they do lone and made god chere,  
and eate and drunke full well:  
Here is a fit of these wyght yemen,  
another I woul-pon sell.

**A** So they sac in English wood,  
vnder their trusty tre:

They thought they heard a woman wepe,  
but her they coulo not see.

Soe then sigbed faire Alice,  
that euer I saw this day:

For now is my deate husband slaine,  
alas and welawis.

Pygme I thus spoke when his deare byethen,  
or with either of them twaine:

As she w to them what him besell,  
my heart were out of paine.

Cloud: He walkt a little afoe,  
and lokt vnder the grene wood linde,

He saw his wife and chyldren thre,  
full woe in heart and minde.

Welcome wiffe then said William,  
vnder a trusty tre:

I had wend yester day by foot to Iohn,  
thou shouldst me neuer had see.

Now well is me she said that ye be here,  
my heart is out of woe:

Wame he said be merry and glad,  
and thanke my byethen twoe.

## *Adam Bell.*

So may I thine, said Adam Bell,  
this game likest not me.  
But god Lord we besech you now,  
that ye will grant vs grace,  
Insomuch as we do to you come,  
or else that we may from you passe,  
With such weapons as we haue here,  
till we be out of your place:  
And if we liue this hundredth yere,  
we will aske of you no grace.  
He speake proudly said the King,  
ye shall be hanged all thre:  
What were great pittie said the Quene,  
if any grace might be.  
My Lord when I came first into this land  
to be your wedded wife,  
The first bone that I would aske,  
you would grant me helme:  
And I asked ye neuer none till now,  
therfore god Lord grant it me:  
Now aske it Adam said the King  
and granted shall it be.  
When god Lord I you besech,  
these yemen grant ye me.  
Adam, ye might haue asked a bone,  
that should haue bin worth them all thre:  
Ye might haue asked towres and townes,  
Parkes and Forrests plenty.  
None so pleasant to my pay he said,  
nor none so laze to me.  
Adam, sth it is your desire,  
your asking granted shall be:  
But I had leuer haue giuen you  
god Market townes thre.  
The Quene was a glad woman,

## Adam Bell.

but boldly went in therat.  
They preceded preene into the hall,  
of which they had dead:  
The Porter came after, and did them call,  
and with them gan to chide.  
The other said, yemen what would you haue,  
I pray you tell to me?  
You might make Officers bent,  
good sirs from whence be ye?  
Sir, we be out lawes of the foyrest,  
certaine without any lease:  
And hither we become to the King,  
to get vs a charter of peace.  
And when they came before the King,  
as it was the law of the land:  
They knyled colone without letting,  
and each held vp his hand.  
They said, Lord we besech this here,  
that ye will grant vs grace:  
For we haue slaine your fat fellowe Daire,  
in any a sundry place.  
What be your names then said the King,  
anon that you tell me:  
Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough,  
and William of Clough se.  
Be ye those thowes said the King,  
that men haue told to me:  
Here to God I make a vowe,  
ye shall be hangd all thre.  
Ye shall be dead without mercy,  
as I am King of this land:  
We commanded his Officers every chone,  
fast on them to lay hand.  
Therefore they took these good yemen,  
and arrested them all thre:

## Adam Bell.

First the Justice and the Sheriffe,  
and the Mayor of Carle town,  
Of all the Constables and Catchpoles,  
alive were left not one.  
The Bailiffes and the Beadles both,  
and the Sergeants of the Law:  
And forty Foresters of the sex,  
these outlawes have yslaw.  
And broke his Parks, and slaine his dère,  
of all they chose the best:  
So perillous outlawes as they were,  
walked not by East nor West.  
When the King this letter had read,  
in heart he sighed sore:  
Take up the Table then said he,  
for I can eat no more.  
The King then called his best Archers,  
to the Butts with him to go:  
I will see these fellows shote said he,  
that in the North hath wrought this wo.  
The Kings Bowmen busht them blith,  
and the Quenes Archers also:  
So did these wight yemen,  
with them they thought to go.  
There twice or thrice they shot about,  
for to assay their hand:  
There was no shote these yemen shot,  
that any pycke might stand.  
Then spake William of Cloudeste,  
by him that for me dyed:  
I hold him never a good Archer,  
that shote at Butts so wide.  
Whereat then said the King  
I pray thee tell to me,  
At such a Butt, as he said,

## Adam Bell.

and said, Lord garmarie.  
I dare undertake for them,  
that true men they shall bee:  
But good Lord speake some meery word,  
that they might comfort see.  
I grant you grace then said the King,  
wash fellowes and to meat go ye.  
They had not sitten but a while,  
certaine without leasing.  
There came two messengers out of the North  
with letters to our King.  
And when they came before the King,  
they knaked downe upon their knee:  
And said our Officers greete you well,  
of Carlile in the North Country.  
How fareth my Iustice (said the King)  
and my Scheffrie also:  
Soir they beaine without leasing,  
and many an Officer more.  
Who hathaine them, said the King,  
anon that you tell me:  
Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough,  
and William of Cloud &c.  
Alas for ruth then said our King,  
my heart is wondrous soze:  
I haue leuer then a thousand pound,  
I had knowne this before.  
For I haue granted them grace,  
and that forthinketh me:  
But had I knowne all this before,  
they had be hangd all thre.  
The King opened the Letter anon,  
himselfe he read it tho:  
And there found how these outlawes had laine,  
thre hundred men and more.



## Adam Bell.

And there euen before the King,  
in the earth he droue a stake.  
And bound thereto his eldest sonne,  
and bad him stand still thereat :  
And turned the childe's face him fro,  
because he should not start.  
An apple vpon his head he set.  
and then his bow he bent :  
Discoyered there were met,  
and thither Cloudeſle went.  
There he drow out a faire broad arrow,  
his bow were great and long :  
He set that arrow in his bow,  
that was both stiffe and strong.  
He prayed the people that were there,  
that they would still stand :  
For he that shotteth for such a wager,  
had neede of a streddy hand.  
Such people prayed for Cloudeſle,  
that his life saved might be :  
And when he made him ready to shott,  
there was many a weeping eye.  
Thus Cloudeſle cleave the apple in two,  
as many a man might see :  
Now God forbid then said the King,  
that thou shouldst shote at me.  
I give thee xxiii pence a day,  
and my cois shall thou beare :  
And ouer all the South Country,  
I make thee chiefe Ranger.  
And I leaue thee xiii pence a day, said the Duke,  
by God, and by my say :  
Come fetch thy payment: when thou wilt,  
no man shall say thee nay.  
William, I make thee a Gentleman,

## Adam Bell.

as men die in my Country.  
William went into the field,  
and his two brethren with him,  
Where they set vp two basell rods;  
t'wenty scope paces betwene.  
I bold him an Archer, said Cloudeffe,  
that powder wand cleaueth in two:  
Here is none such, said the King,  
for no man can so do.  
I shall assay sir, said Cloudeffe,  
or that I further go:  
Cloudeffe with a beaxing arrow,  
cleaue the wand in two.  
When art the best Archer, said the King,  
forsooth that euer I see:  
And yet for your loue, said William,  
I will do moze matterie.  
I haue a sonne is seven yere old,  
he is to me full dere:  
I will tie him to a stake,  
all shall see him that be here.  
And lay an apple vpon his head,  
and go firoze paces him fro:  
And I my selfe with a beaxing arrow,  
shall cleaue the apple in two.  
Now hast thou then said the King,  
by him that dyed on a tree:  
But if thou do not as thou hast said,  
banged shalt thou be.  
And thou touch his head or gone,  
in sight that man may sa:  
By all the S'aints that be in heau'n,  
I shall you hang all thre.  
That I haue promysed, said William,  
I neuer will forsake.

and



*Adam Bell.*

of clothing and of fe:

And the two brethren yemen of my Chamber,  
for they are lonly to se.

Our soune for he is tender of age,  
of my Aine seiler he shall be:

And when he comes to mans estate,  
better preferred shal he be.

And William bring me your wife, said the D.  
I long full so to se:

He shall be my chiefe Gentlewoman,  
to gouerne my Butlerie.

The yemen thanked them full courteously,  
and said to some Bishop we will wend,

Of all the sinnes that we haue done,  
to be assored at his hand.

So soth be gone the good yemen.  
as fast as they can bie:

And after came and lined with the king,  
and dyed good yemen all thre.

Thus endeth the liues of these good yemen,  
God send them eternall blisse:

And al that with hand boloweth,  
that of heauen may neuer misse.

FINIS.

1228131



## Adam Bell.



**M**ERKE it was in the green Forrest,  
among the leaues green:  
whereas men hunt east and west  
with bowes and arrows been,  
To raise the Deer out of their den,  
such sights have not oft been seen:  
As by threemen of the North Countrey,  
by them it is I mean.  
The one of them height Adam Bell,  
another Clim of the Clough,  
The third was William of Cloudele,  
an Archer good enough.  
They were outlawed for Wenison,  
these geomen sberp chone:  
They swore them brethren on a day,  
to English wood for to gone.  
Now list and listen Gentlemen,  
that of mirth loveth to hear:  
Two of them were single men,  
the third had wedded fere.  
William was the wedded man,  
much more then was his care:  
He said to his brethren on a day,  
to Carlile he would fare,  
There to speak with fair Alice his wiffe,  
and with his childzen thre.  
By my troth said Adam Bell,  
not by the counsel of me:  
For if we go to Carlile brother,  
and from this wild wood wend,  
If that the Justice do you take,  
your life is at an end.

A 2

## Adam Bell.

If that I come nat to morrow brother,  
by prime to you again :  
Trust you then that I am taken,  
or else that I am slain.  
He took his leafe of his brethren two  
and to Carlile he is gone :  
There he knocked at his own window,  
hoztly and anon.  
Where be you fair Alice ? he said,  
my Wiffe and Childzen thre :  
Lightly let in thine own Husband  
William of Clondesse.  
Alas then said fair Alice,  
and sighed very soze :  
This place hath been beset for you,  
full half a year and moze.  
Now am I here said Clondesse,  
I would that in I were :  
Now fetch us meat and drink enough,  
and let us make good cheer.  
She fetcht him meat and drink plenty,  
like a true wedded wife :  
And pleased him with what he had,  
whom he loved as her life.  
There lay an old wife in that place,  
a little befoze the fire :  
which William had found of charity,  
moze then seven year.  
Up she rose, and forth she goes,  
evil might she speed therfore;  
For she had not set no foot on ground,  
in seven years befoze.  
She went into the Justice hall,  
as fast as she could hie :  
This night she said is come to town,

William

## Adam Bell.

William of Cloudeſle.

Whereat the Juſtice was full ſain,  
and ſo the Sheriſſ alſo.

Thou ſhalt not trabel hiſher for nought,  
thy need thou ſhalt have ere thou go.

They gave to her a right good gaten,  
of Scarlet it was I heard ſain :

She took the gift and home ſhe went,  
and couched her down again.

They raiſed the Town of merry Carlile.  
in all the haſte they can :

And thronging faſt unto the Houſe,  
as faſt as they might gan ;

There they beſet the good peoman,  
about on every ſide :

William heard great noiſe of the ſolt,  
that thitherward faſt hide.

Alice opened a back window,  
and looked all about :

She was ware of the Juſtice and Sheriſſ,  
and with that a great rout.

Alas treaſon, then cried Alice,  
what troſ may thou be :

Go into my chamber huſband, he ſaid,  
ſweet William of Cloudeſle.

He took his ſword and his buckler,  
his bow and children three :

And went into the ſtrongest chamber,  
where he thought ſureſt to be.

Fair Alice like a lover true,  
with a Pollax in her hand :

Said, he ſhall dye that cometh in  
this dooz, while I may ſtand.

Cloudeſle bent a right good bow,  
that was of Muſty tree :

## Adam Bell.

He smote the Justice on the brest,  
that his arrow burst in thre.  
Gods curse of his heart said William,  
this day thy coat did ore.  
If it had been no better then mine,  
it had been neer the bone.  
Peeld thee Cloundesle said the Justice,  
and thy bow and thy arrowes thee fro :  
Gods curse on his heart said fair Alice,  
that my husband counselleth so.  
Set fire on the house said the Sheriff,  
with no better it will be :  
And burn we therein, William he saith,  
his wife and childzen thre.  
They fired the house in many a place,  
the fire flow on high :  
Alas then said fair Alice,  
I see we here shall dye.  
William opened a back window,  
that was in his chamber lye :  
And there with sheets he did let down,  
his wife and childzen thre :  
For Christs love do them no harm,  
but to seek pou all on me.  
William shot so wondrous well,  
till his arrowes were all gone :  
And fire so fast about him fell,  
that his bow string bent in thro.  
The sparkles bent and fell upon,  
good William of Cloundesle :  
But then was he a woful man,  
and said, this is a Cowards death to me.  
Heber had I said William,

## Adam Bell.

with my sword in the rout to run :  
Then here amongst mine enemies wood,  
so cruelly to burn.  
He took his sword and buckler then,  
and among them all he ran :  
Where the people thickest were,  
he smote down many a man.  
There might no man abide his strokes,  
so fiercely on them he ran :  
Then they toke windows and doore on him,  
and so took that peoman.  
There they him bound hand and foot,  
and in a deep dungeon him cast.  
Now Cloudeffe then said the Justice,  
thou shalt be hanged in hast,  
One how shall I make said the Sheriff,  
a pair of new gallows thou shalt have,  
And all the gates of Carlile shall be shut,  
there shall no man come in thereat.  
There shall not help Clim of the Clough,  
nor yet Adam Bell,  
Though they come with a thousand more,  
nor all the devils in hell.  
Early in the morning the Justice arose,  
to the gates fast gan he gone :  
And commanded to shut close,  
lighte ebery chone.  
Then went to the Market place,  
as fast as they can he :  
A pair of new gallows there he did set up,  
beside the Pillory.  
A litte boy stood them among,  
and askt what meant that gallow tree :  
They said to hang a good peomon,  
called VWilliam of Cloudeffe.

That



## Adam Bell.

That little Boy was Toton Swine-herd,  
and kept fair Alice swine :  
Full oft he had seen Cloudesle in the woode  
and gabe him there to dine ;  
He went out of a crevice of the wall,  
and lightly to the wood he ran :  
There he met with thre twelght yemen,  
spozily and anon.  
Alas then said the little boy,  
you tarry here all too long :  
Cloudesle is tane and doom'd to death,  
and ready to be hang'd.  
Alas then said good Adam Bell,  
that eber we saw this day :  
He might have tarryed here with us,  
so oft we did him pray.  
He might have dwelt in green Forrest,  
under these shadowes been :  
And kept both him and us at rest,  
out of trouble and tene.  
Adam bent a right good bow,  
a great heart soon he had slain :  
Take that child he said to thy dinner,  
and bring me mine arrow again.  
Now we go hence said the se i. lly yemen,  
tarry we no longer here :  
We shall him buy by Gods grace,  
though we buy it full dear.  
So Carlile went these good yemen,  
in a merry morning of May :  
Here is a fit of Cloudesle,  
another is for to say.

**A**ND when they came to merry Carlile,  
in a feir morning tide :

The

## *Adam Bell.*

They found the gates shut them unto,  
round about on every side.  
Alas then said good Adam Bell,  
that ever we were made men,  
These gates are shut so wondrous well,  
that we may not come therein.  
Then spake Clim of the Clough,  
with a wile we will us in bring :  
Let us say we be messengers,  
straight come from the King.  
Adam said I have a Letter, well  
let us wisely warke :  
We will say we have the Kings seal,  
I hold the Porter no Clark.  
Then Adam Bell beat at the gate,  
with strokes great and strong :  
The Porter heard such a noise thereat,  
and to the gates he throng.  
Who is there said the Porter,  
that maketh all this knocking ?  
We be two messengers said they then,  
become right from the King.  
We have a Letter said Adam Bell,  
to the Justice I must it bring :  
Let us in our message to do,  
that we were again to the King.  
Here cometh none in said the Porter,  
by him that dyed of a tree :  
Till that a false thief be hang'd,  
call'd Wil iam of Cloudestle.  
Then spake Clim of the Clough,  
and swore by Mary free :  
If that we stand long without,  
like a thief hang'd shalt thou be;  
Lo here we have the Kings Seal,

## Adam Bell.

What Lurden art thou hood?  
The Porter weend it had been so,  
and lightlȝ did off his hood.  
Welcome is my Lords seal he said,  
For that you shall come in:  
He opened the gates full hoſtly,  
an eſil opening for him.  
Now are we in ſaid Adam Bell,  
whereof we are right fain:  
But Chriſt he knowes assuredly,  
how we ſhall out again.  
Had we the Keyes ſaid Clim of the Clough,  
right well then ſhould we ſpeed:  
Then might we come out well enough,  
when we ſee time and need,  
They called the porter to counſell,  
and wꝛung his neck in two:  
And caſt him in a deep dungeon,  
and took the Keyes him fro.  
Now am I Porter ſaid Adam Bell,  
ſee brother the Keyes we have here.  
The worſt Porter in merry Carlile,  
that came this hundred year,  
Now we will our bowes bend,  
into the Town will we go:  
For to deliber our dear brother,  
that lyeth in care and woe.  
Then they bent their good yew bowes,  
and looked their ſtrings were round,  
The Market place in merry Carlile,  
they beſet in that ſound,  
And as they looked them beſide,  
a pair of new gallows there they ſee,  
And the Juſtice with a Queſt of Squires,  
that ſudgeth William hanged to be.

And

## Adam Bell.

And Cloudeſſe lay ready there in a Cart,  
fast bound both foot and hand :  
And a strong rope about his neck,  
already for to hang.  
The Justice cal'd to him a lad,  
Cloudeſſe's clothes he should have,  
To take the measure of that peoman,  
and thereby to make him a grave.  
I have seen a great marble said Cloudeſſe,  
as between this and prime :  
He that maketh a grave for me,  
himself may lye therein.  
Thou speakest proudly said the Justice,  
I will thee hang with my hand :  
Full well heard this his brethren two,  
there still as they did stand.  
Then William cast his eye aside,  
and saw his two brethren  
At the corner of the market place well pre-  
pared the Justice to chase. (part'd,  
I see comfort said Cloudeſſe,  
yet hope I well to fare :  
If I might have my hands let free,  
right little might I care.  
Then spake good Adam Bell,  
to Clim of the Clough so free :  
Whether see you mark the Justice well,  
Ie ponder you may him see.  
At the Sheriff shoot I will,  
strongly with an arrow keen :  
A better shoot in merry Carlile,  
this seven years was not seen,  
They loſed their arrows both at once,  
of no man they had dread :

## Adam Bell.

The one bit the Justice the other the Sheriff  
that both their hoes gan bleed,  
All men hoped that good them nye,  
when the Justice fell to the ground :  
And the Sheriff nye him by,  
either had his death wound.  
All the Citizens fast gad flee,  
they durst no longer abide ;  
There lightly they loosed Cloudeffe,  
where he with ropes lay tye,  
William leapt to an Officer of the Town,  
his Ax out of his hand he wung :  
On each side he smote them down,  
him thought he tarried all too long.  
William said to his brethren two,  
this day let us live and dye :  
It ever you have need as I have now,  
the same shall you finde by me.  
They shot so well that tide,  
for their strings were of silk sure,  
That they kept the street on every side,  
the battell did long endure.  
They fought together like brethren true,  
like hardy men and bold :  
Many a man to the ground they threw,  
and made many a heart cold.  
But when their arrows were all gone,  
men pressed on them full fast :  
They drew their swords then anon,  
and their bowes from them cast.  
They went lightly in their way,  
with swords and bucklers round :  
By that it were mid of the day,  
they made many a wound,  
Many an out horn in Carlisle was blown,

and



## Adam Bell.

and the Bels backward did ring :  
Many a woman said alas,  
and many their hands did wring.  
The Maioz of Carlile forth come trav,  
and with him a full great rout :  
These peomen dread him full sore,  
for of their lives they were in great doubt;  
The Maioz came armed a full great pace,  
with a Pollax in his hand :  
Many a strong man with him was,  
within that flour to stand.  
The Maioz smot at Cloudestle with his bill  
his Buckloz brest in two :  
Full many a peoman with great eil,  
alas treason they cry'd for woe.  
Keep we the gates fast they bad,  
that these Traptoz therout not go:  
But all for nought was that they wrought,  
for so fast down they were laid,  
Till they all three that so manfully fought,  
were gotten out of a braid.  
Habe here your keyes said Adam Bell,  
my office here I forsake :  
If you do by my councel,  
a new porter do you make,  
He thzeu the keyes at their heads,  
and bad them eil to thzide ;  
And all that letteth any good peoman,  
to come and comfort his wife,  
Thus be the good peomen gone to the wood  
as lightly as leaf on linde ;  
They laugh and be merrg in their mood,  
their enemies were farr behinde,  
When they came to English wood,  
under the trusty tree ;

## Adam Bell.

There they found Bowes full good,  
and Arrowes great plenty.  
So God me help said Adam Bell,  
and Clim of the Clough so free,  
I would we were in merry Carlile,  
befoze that fair many.  
Then sate they down and made good cheer,  
and eat and drunk full well :  
Here is a fit of these wight yemen,  
another I will you tell.

As they sate in English wood,  
under their trusty tree :  
They thought they heard a woman weep,  
but her they could not see.  
Soze then sighed fair Alice,  
that eber I saw this day :  
For now is my dear husband slain,  
alas and well away.  
Might I have spoke with his deer brethren,  
or with either of them twain,  
To shew to them what him befel,  
my heart were out of pain.  
Cloudelesse walkt a little aside,  
and lookt under the green wood linde,  
He saw his wife and children thre,  
full woe in heart and minde,  
Welcome wife then said William,  
under this trusty tree :  
I had weend yesterdaj by sweet S. John,  
thou shouldst me neber see.  
Now well is me she said that ye be here,  
my heart is out of woe :  
Dame he say be merry and glad,  
and thank my brethren two.

Hereof

## *Adam Bell.*

Hereof to speak said Adam Bell,  
It wis it is no boot :  
The meat that we must sup withall,  
it resteth yet fast on foot.  
Then went they down unto the land,  
These Noblemen all three :  
Each of them drew a Part of Greece,  
the best they could there see,  
Have here the best Alice my wife,  
said William of Cloudesle :  
Because ye so boldly stood by me,  
when I was slain full nye.  
Then they went to supper,  
with such meat as they had :  
And thanked God for their fortune,  
they were merry and glad,  
And when they had supped well,  
certain without any lease.  
Cloudesle said we will to our King,  
to get us a Charter of peace.  
Alice shall be at our sojourning,  
in a Runnery here beside :  
My two sons shall with her go,  
and there they shall abide.  
My eldest son shall go with me,  
for him I have no care :  
And he shall bring you word again,  
how that we do fare.  
Thus be these good peomen to London gon,  
as fast as they may bye :  
Till they came to the Kings pallace,  
where they would needs be.  
And when they came to the Kings Court,  
unto the pallace gate :  
Of no man would they ask leave,

but

## Adam Bell.

but boldly went in thereat,  
They proceeded present into the hall,  
of no man they had dread :  
The Porter came after, and did them call,  
and with them gan to chide.  
The Wither said, yeoman what would you  
I pray you tell to me ? (habe  
You might have Officers went,  
good sirs from whence be ye ?  
Sir, we be out-lawes of the Forrest,  
certain without any lease :  
And hither we be come to the King,  
to get us a charter of peace.  
And when they came befoze the King,  
as it was the Law of the Land :  
They kneeled down without letting,  
and each held up his hand.  
They said, Lord we beseech thes here,  
that ye will grant us grace :  
For we have slain your fat fellow Deer,  
in many a sundry place.  
What be your names then said the King,  
anon that you tell me :  
Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough,  
and William of Cloudeste.  
Be ye those theebes said the King,  
that men have told to me :  
Here to God I make a how,  
ye shall be hang'd all three ;  
Ye shall be dead without mercy,  
as I am King of this Land :  
He commanded his Officers every chone,  
fast on them to lay hand,  
Therefore they took these good peomen,  
and arrested them all three.

## Adam Bell.

Somay I thyrbe said Adam Bell,  
this game liketh not me.  
But good Lord we beseech you now,  
that ye will grant us grace,  
Insomuch as we do to you come,  
or else that we may from you pass,  
With such weapons as we have here,  
till we be out of your place :  
And if we live this hundred year,  
we will ask of you no grace,  
Ye speak proudly said the King.  
ye shall be hanged all three :  
That were great pity said the Queen,  
if any grace might be.  
My Lord when I came first into this Land  
to be your wedded wife,  
The first boon that I would ask,  
you would grant me belibe :  
And I asked ye never none till now,  
therefore good Lord grant it me.  
Now ask it Adam said the King  
and granted it shall be.  
Then good Lord I you beseech,  
these peomen grant ye me :  
Adam ye might have asked a boon,  
that should have been worth them all three :  
Ye might have asked Towers and Towns,  
Parks and Forests plenty :  
None so pleasant to my pay he said,  
nor none so leet to me.  
Adam, sith it is your desire,  
your asking granted shall be :  
But I had leter have given you,  
good Market Towns three.  
The Queen was a glad woman,  
and



## Adam Bell.

and said, Lord gramarcy.  
I dare undertake for them,  
that true men they shall be :  
But good Lord speake some merry word,  
that they might comfort see.  
I grant you grace then said the King,  
wash fellows and to meat go ye.  
They had not sitten but a while,  
certain without leasing :  
There came two messengers out of the North  
with letters to the King.  
And when they came before the King,  
they kneeled down upon their knee :  
And said your Officers greet you well,  
of Carlile in the North Country.  
How fareth my Justice (said the King)  
and my Sheriff also :  
Sir they be slain without leasing,  
and many an Officer more.  
Who hath them slain, said the King,  
anon that you tell me :  
Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough,  
and William of Cloudestle.  
Alas for truth then said the King,  
my heart is wondrous sore :  
I had leber than a thousand pound,  
I had known this before,  
For I have granted them grace,  
and that forgetteth me :  
But had I known all this before,  
they had been hanged all three,  
The King opened the Letter anon,  
himself he read it so : (slain,  
And there he found how these outlaws had  
three hundred men and more,

## Adam Bell.

First the Justice and the Sheriff,  
and the Mayor of Carlile Town,  
Of all the Constables and Catchpoles,  
alibe he left not one.  
The Bailiffs and the Beadles both,  
and the Sergeants of the Law :  
And forty Foresters of the see,  
these outlaws have yllaw,  
And broke his Parks and slain his deer,  
of all they chose the best :  
So perillous outlaws as they were,  
walked not by East or West.  
When the King this Letter had read,  
in heart he sighed full sore :  
Take up the table then said he,  
for I can eat no more.  
The King then called his best Archers  
to the Butts with him to go :  
I will see these fellows shoot said he  
that in the Port have wrought this woe.  
The Kings Bowmen buskt them blith,  
and the Queens Archers also :  
So did these wight peomen,  
with them they thought to go.  
There twice or thrice they shot about,  
for to assay their hand :  
There was no shoot these peomen shot,  
What any prick might stand.  
Then spake William of Cloudestle,  
by him that for me dyed :  
I hold him neber a good Archer,  
that shooteth at Butts so wide.  
Whereat then said the King,  
I pray thee tell to me :  
At such a Butt fir he said,

## Adam Bell.

as men use in my countrey.  
William went into the field,  
and his two brethren with him,  
There they set up two basel rods,  
twenty scoze pace between :  
I hold him an Archer, said Cloudesle,  
that younger wand cleabeth in two ;  
There is none such, said the King,  
for no man can so do.  
I shall assay sir, said Cloudesle,  
oz that I further go :  
Cloudesle with a bearing arrow,  
cleabe the wand in two.  
Thou art the best Archer, said the King,  
forsooth that eber I see :  
And yet for your love said William  
I will do moze matterp,  
I habe a son is seven years old,  
he is to me full dear :  
I will tie him to a stake,  
all shall see him that be here,  
And lay an apple upon his head,  
and go six scoze pace him fro :  
And I my self with a broad arrow,  
shall cleabe the apple in two.  
Now hast thee then, said the King,  
by him that dyed on a tree ;  
But if thou dost not as thou hast said,  
hanged shalt thou be,  
And thou touch his head oz golden,  
in sight that men may see :  
By all the Saints that be in Heab'n,  
I shall you hang all three.  
That I habe promised said William,  
I never will forsake :

And

## Adam Bell.

And there euen before the King,  
in the earth he dyed a stake;  
And bound thereto his eldest son,  
and had him stand still therat :  
And turned the child's face him fro,  
because he should not start.  
An Apple upon his head he set,  
and then his bow he bent :  
Sixscore paces there were met,  
and thither Cloudeſle went.  
There he dyed cut a fair broad arrow,  
his bow was great and long,  
He set that arrow in his Bow,  
that was both stiff and strong,  
He prayed the people that were there,  
that they would still stand :  
For he that shooteth for such a wager,  
had need of a ſteddy hand.  
Much people prayed for Cloudeſle,  
that his life ſaved might be :  
And when he made him ready to shoot,  
there was many a weeping eye.  
Thus Cloudeſle clabe the Apple in two,  
as many a man might ſee :  
Now God forbid then ſaid the King,  
that thou ſhouldeſt ſhoot at me.  
I giue thee xlii. pence a day,  
and my bow ſhalt thou bear :  
And oer all the North Country,  
I make the chief Rider,  
And I ſhall giue thee xlii. pence a day, ſaid the  
by God, and by my ſay, (Queen,  
Come fetch thy payment when thou wilt,  
no man ſhall ſay thee nay.  
William, I make thee a Gentleman,

## Adam Bell.

of clothing and of fee :  
And thy two brethzen women of my Cham-  
ber, for they are lovely to see :  
Your son for he is tender of age,  
of my twine celloz shall be,  
And when he comes to mans estate,  
better preferred shall he be,  
And William bring me four wife, said the  
I long full soze to see : (Queen.  
She shall be my chief Gentlewoman,  
to govern my Purser.  
The women thanked them full curteously,  
and said to some Wistop we will tward,  
Of all the sins that we have done,  
to be assayed at his hand.  
So forth be gone these good women,  
as fast as they can bie,  
And after came and lived with the King,  
and died good women all thre.  
Thus endeth the liues of these good women,  
God send them eternal blis :  
And all that with hand bow shootech,  
that of heauen may neber mis.

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